



LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Henry J. Mroz Administration Office
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Sokhary Chau
Mayor and Chairperson

Jackie Doherty
Vice-Chairperson

Eileen Delrossi
Andre P. Descoteaux
Dominik Lay
Connie A. Martin
Stacey Thompson

Curriculum & Instruction
Subcommittee Meeting

Monday, January 24, 2022
City Hall – Council Chamber
5:30 p.m.

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Subcommittee Members Present:	Chairperson Ms. Martin and Ms. Delrossi. Ms. Thompson arrived at 5:42 p.
School Committee Members Present:	Mr. Descoteaux and Ms. Doherty
School Department Personnel Present:	Ms. Desmond, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Vicente, Director of Special Education

Chairperson Martin called the meeting to order at 5:36p.m. The following agenda item was discussed:

- 1. Special Education/Leblanc School Update**
- 2. Fine Arts - Curriculum Update**

Ms. Martin asked Ms. Desmond to address the Subcommittee. Ms. Desmond introduced Ms. Daviso and Ms. Selvaggio. Ms. Daviso stated that the current graduation requirements for Lowell High School students, as per the 2021-2022 Student Handbook, require that students must select Physical Education each year and pass four (4) semesters in Physical Education for (10) credits. AFJROTC, Dance, Band, or Show Choir may be substituted each year for this requirement. Students must select Health Education A in the ninth (9th) grade and Health Education B in the tenth (10th) grade. She stated that both health courses (2.5 credits each) must be passed for a total of five (5) credits and that AFJROTC may be substituted each year for this requirement. Ms. Selvaggio stated that in order to better align the Lowell High School graduation requirements to the forthcoming revised Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Framework, which places a greater emphasis on health as a form of personal wellness, it was

requested that the School Committee allow all PE-equivalent classes to fulfill the Health A and Health B requirements. As such, AFJROTC, Dance, Band, or Show Choir could be taken to meet this requirement. This change provides a benefit to all affected academic departments, providing opportunities for increased Fine Arts enrollment and program retention while decreasing oversubscribed Health classes. Additionally, these changes mark Lowell High School's first step in revisiting graduation requirements in efforts to improve the MassCore Graduation completion rates. A motion was made and approved on the floor approving that request. She stated that a partnership with Team Block, which is a part of Lowell Community Health Center will deliver courses to our students and they're more than willing to map out curriculum for next school year as well.

Ms. Delrossi asked how much this will cost the district.

Ms. Selvaggio stated that Team Block is grant funded and there will be no charge to the district.

Ms. Martin asked how it will balance out with the Fine Arts teacher's duties.

Ms. Daviso stated that they have been incorporating this content.

Mr. Heitzman, a former Lowell High School Health teacher addressed the Committee and discussed his concerns with Team Block teaching this.

Mr. Descoteaux asked how AFJR presents this component and stated that he would like to receive that information.

Ms. Martin stated that the Curriculum Subcommittee will be a great place to follow up on this curriculum and suggested that the Subcommittee meet again in four (4) to six (6) weeks to discuss updates with this program.

Ms. Doherty stated that she had and still has concerns. She also stated she would like to explore students who are playing sports be included in meeting the requirement.

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept the report as a report of progress; seconded by Ms. Delrossi. 2 yeas, 1 abstain (Ms. Thompson). APPROVED

Dr. Vicente then addressed the Subcommittee regarding Leblanc School staffing. He stated that the staffing has not really changed over a five (5) year period. He stated that a BCBA's job description is as follows:

- Provide consultation and professional development to staff in order to ensure implementation of "best practices" for all students.
- Conduct FBAs.
- Perform casework services with individual children to correct deficits in behavioral, emotional or social functioning that impedes their academic and social progress.
- Provide recommendations and upon approval by the program coordinator, coordinate the referral of children to various agencies as necessary.
- Provide psycho-educational support for children and their parents, ex. interpretation of psychological testing.
- Maintain case records and submit statistical data as required.

- Create data sheets, assist in data collection and analyze data in order to enhance student performance in skill acquisition.
- Provide case management and coordination of services for identified students.
- Consult and collaborate with staff in gathering and giving information on a case, and in establishing and planning for respective roles in the modification of student's behavior. Collaborate with faculty in compiling academic and behavioral results for presentation at Return Meetings for students returning to their home school.
- Collaborate with teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, parents, building Administrators and outside agencies in order to provide consistency in programming.
- Assist in the IEP process by attending meetings, summarizing data and the development of measurable goals and objectives.
- Perform casework service with parents as an integral part of the task of helping students; to increase the parent's understanding, their constructive participation in resolving their child's problems, and their knowledge and use of appropriate resources available
- To provide other duties related to parent involvement as directed by the Administrators of Special Education.
- To perform such other job related tasks and assume such other responsibilities as assigned by the Building Principal and/or Administrators of Special Education.

He stated that currently the BCBA at the Leblanc is also supporting Lowell High school and an FMLA at the Shaughnessy like many other BCBA's who are stepping out of their roles to help out. He stated that BCBA's work in groups to two (2). Dr. Vicente stated that he would not suggest that the Leblanc School doesn't have great needs and that he is still learning about the Leblanc School.

Ms. Bisantz and Mr. Durkin, Leblanc School staff advocated for a full time BCBA at the Leblanc as well as shared their safety concerns with the Subcommittee.

Ms. Doherty stated that she recognizes the challenging times and wanted to know if we have been looking to hire more BCBA's.

Dr. Vicente stated that he is always analyzing the Special Education needs of the district. He stated that the district has been trying to hire more paraprofessionals and social workers. He stated that the Leblanc School's attendance has been significantly impacted. Please see the monthly average attendance breakdown below:

- September 19
- October 18
- November 19
- December 20
- January 19

He stated that in September the enrollment at the Leblanc started with thirty-four (34) students and currently there are forty-one (41) enrolled and the COVID chronic absentee rate is 28%.

Ms. Delrossi asked if there is a social worker at the Leblanc School and if the services from the BCBA are justified per the students IEP.

Dr. Vicente stated that most BCBA's are working on an IEP and their role is to really consult with staff and have less direct services. Yes, a social worker is full time at the school.

Mr. Descoteaux asked if we are able to fulfill all of our legal requirements and in compliance.

Dr. Vicente stated that we work to meet our requirements and he believes we are meeting all of our legal requirements.

Ms. Martin asked if they're managing a case load.

Dr. Vicente stated that each BCBA has a group of schools and established schedules and meet with teachers daily.

Ms. Martin asked if there was a professional standard.

Dr. Vicente stated that it's difficult to answer. He stated that there is some variance there and that they have a governing board. He stated he can't really speak to it, but can provide more information to the subcommittee.

Ms. Martin asked about the attendance. She asked if it was COVID related, because the attendance issue is telling her that more needs to be done.

Mr. Descoteaux stated that he doesn't believe we should be going by the numbers. He stated that Leblanc students have no other schools to choose from and that staff shouldn't feel unsafe.

Ms. Doherty asked who decides what schools RSO's go to.

Ms. Desmond stated that she will get that information for the subcommittee.

Ms. Martin stated that we need to get more comprehensive information and follow up in six (6) weeks.

**Ms. Thompson made a motion to adjourn at 7:03 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Delrossi. 3 yeas
APPROVED**

Respectfully submitted,



Robin Desmond, Chief Academic Officer
for Dr. Joel Boyd, Superintendent and
Secretary, Lowell School Committee

RAD/mes